

SC358046

Registered provider: The Senad Group Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This privately run service is registered as a children's home, with a school on the same site. The home provides care for up to 32 children who have autism spectrum disorder, Asperger syndrome, acquired brain injury and/or communication difficulties. Most of the children living here return to their family home for the school holidays.

The manager registered with Ofsted in 2014. She is qualified and has substantial experience.

The inspectors only inspected the social care provision at this school.

Inspectors were aware during this inspection that serious safeguarding concerns were being investigated by the appropriate authorities. While Ofsted does not have the power to investigate concerns of this kind, actions taken by the setting in response to the concerns were considered alongside other evidence available at the time of the inspection to inform inspectors' judgements.

Inspection dates: 9 and 10 May 2022

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account **inadequate**

How well children and young people are helped and protected **inadequate**

The effectiveness of leaders and managers **inadequate**

There are serious and/or widespread failures that mean children and young people are not protected or their welfare is not promoted or safeguarded and/or the care and experiences of children and young people are poor and they are not making progress.

Date of last inspection: 6 July 2021

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
06/07/2021	Full	Good
10/07/2019	Full	Good
26/09/2018	Full	Outstanding
14/11/2017	Full	Outstanding

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: inadequate

Inspectors identified serious concerns relating to the protection of children living at the home. A number of shortfalls related to the night-time monitoring of children, poor practice in relation to the quality of risk assessments, behaviour management strategies and the management of risk relating to mobile phones.

How well children and young people are helped and protected is a limiting judgement, meaning that the overall judgement for this home is inadequate.

Expectations relating to behaviour, and the consequences of poor behaviour, lead some children to believe that their place at the home and/or school is at risk if behaviour falls short of these expectations. Consequently, children are discouraged from raising concerns at the home, including making disclosures of abuse. These anxieties have resulted in a delay in staff being able to identify and address problematic peer relationships and abusive behaviours.

Several members of staff have moved on recently. This has impaired the children's capacity to form and maintain positive trusting relationships with staff. Children have described how staff moving on has prevented them from talking to newer staff about their emotions and feelings.

All children are in education, although their level of engagement varies. Peer relationships have occasionally impacted on children's emotional health and well-being, affecting engagement in education.

There is a good team around the child and multi-agency approach to children's well-being and their therapeutic needs. This enables children to speak about their past trauma and some of the other things that might be worrying them.

Children are supported to learn age-appropriate independence skills. Staff devise independence programmes that enable children to learn valuable life skills. As a result, children become more confident in their own abilities.

Children's views, wishes and feelings are considered. Children have regular house meetings where they choose their menus, activities and feed back their experiences of living at the home. All children have access to an advocate and some of the children are using this resource. Children have opportunities to participate in a wide range of activities in the home and community. Children's experiences and activities are recorded in photo memory books.

Staff work well with children's families to enable regular family time, providing children with both practical and emotional support. This means that children are not

isolated from their families. Staff are sensitive to children's family and background circumstances, and families value this support.

How well children and young people are helped and protected: inadequate

At the time of this inspection, there were three active investigations relating to the safeguarding of children.

The monitoring of children overnight has been ineffective. This has placed children at risk of harm. Children have been reticent about raising concerns. An example of this is a child not raising concerns about harm as they were worried that they might lose their placement. This is an unintended consequence of a behaviour management strategy that involves contracts regarding acceptable behaviour, and how those expectations have been explained to children.

Risk assessments are of poor quality, as they fail to provide staff with clear direction and sufficient information to manage risks and keep children safe. Risk assessments and plans do not provide staff with a clear understanding of children's needs, risks and vulnerabilities.

Procedures to monitor online safety and mobile phone use are not robust. This has resulted in children being exposed to risk and sexualised behaviour. A recommendation made at the last inspection in relation to online safety has not been met.

Complaints are not always managed effectively. For example, a child made a complaint and a further complaint was made on the child's behalf by their parent. Only the parent received a response to their complaint. The child's complaint has not been responded to or discussed with them directly. There is a risk of children feeling that their voices are not heard. One very recent complaint from a child raises several concerns; in the complaint the child clearly stated that at some points they have not felt safe.

The location risk assessment does not evidence consultation with key agencies, such as the police, and does not provide context to crime in the local area and how these risks are reduced or managed. This results in children being more vulnerable as staff do not know the risks in the local area.

There has been a delay in incidents being notified to Ofsted. Two recent safeguarding notifications have not provided enough detail and have not been consistent with the information provided. The local authority designated officer was not informed of night-time management and staff failings. This has resulted in safeguarding processes not being robust.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: inadequate

There has been a deterioration in the quality of management oversight. Several shortfalls in practice have not been addressed by leaders and managers. Examples

of shortfalls include lack of detail and direction in risk assessments, lack of learning from physical interventions, poor-quality daily care records that lack sufficient detail and the use of sanctions that could be viewed as punitive. All these shortfalls in practice have the capacity to negatively impact on children's experiences.

Staff turnover has been an issue since the last inspection and there are some vacant posts. Staff feel the impact of staff vacancies and children have experienced disrupted relationships. However, the staff working at the home enjoy their work and they are committed to providing better outcomes for children.

Staff receive good support by way of regular supervision, training and team meetings. The quality of supervision records has improved, with evidence of reflective practice. Management meetings take place to review practice and this ensures a shared consistent vision, although identifying and addressing shortfalls has been challenging. Children have not always been safe and do not always feel safe. Leaders and managers have not been sufficiently alert to safeguarding concerns and management monitoring has not maintained a sharp focus on safe care. Consequently, management monitoring has been ineffective.

The managers and staff work closely with other professionals to support children. For example, their therapeutic team, education team and care team meet regularly to discuss children. However, several parents fed back that they have lost faith in the home and felt that managers and staff could have done more to keep their children safe.

Several requirements have been set at this inspection. The recommendation made at the last inspection in relation to online safety has not been met and has been reset as a requirement. A compliance notice has also been issued.

What does the children’s home need to do to improve? Statutory requirements

This section sets out the actions that the registered person(s) must take to meet the Care Standards Act 2000, Children’s Homes (England) Regulations 2015 and the ‘Guide to the Children’s Homes Regulations, including the quality standards’. The registered person(s) must comply within the given timescales.

Requirement	Due date
<p>The positive relationships standard is that children are helped to develop, and to benefit from, relationships based on—</p> <p>mutual respect and trust;</p> <p>an understanding about acceptable behaviour; and positive responses to other children and adults.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure—</p> <p>that staff—</p> <p>encourage each child to take responsibility for the child’s behaviour, in accordance with the child’s age and understanding;</p> <p>help each child to understand, in a way that is appropriate according to the child’s age and understanding, personal, sexual and social relationships, and how those relationships can be supportive or harmful;</p> <p>help each child to develop the understanding and skills to recognise or withdraw from a damaging, exploitative or harmful relationship;</p> <p>strive to gain each child’s respect and trust;</p> <p>understand how children’s previous experiences and present emotions can be communicated through behaviour and have the competence and skills to interpret these and develop positive relationships with children;</p> <p>that each child is encouraged to build and maintain positive relationships with others.</p>	<p>3 July 2022</p>

<p>(Regulation 11 (1)(a)(b)(c) (2)(a)(iii)(vi)(vii)(viii)(ix)(b))</p> <p>This specifically relates to ensuring that children are supported to develop and maintain positive relationships, and are able to identify relationships that may be damaging or harmful.</p>	
<p>*The protection of children standard is that children are protected from harm and enabled to keep themselves safe.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure—</p> <p>that staff—</p> <p>assess whether each child is at risk of harm, taking into account information in the child’s relevant plans, and, if necessary, make arrangements to reduce the risk of any harm to the child;</p> <p>help each child to understand how to keep safe;</p> <p>have the skills to identify and act upon signs that a child is at risk of harm;</p> <p>manage relationships between children to prevent them from harming each other;</p> <p>understand the roles and responsibilities in relation to protecting children that are assigned to them by the registered person;</p> <p>take effective action whenever there is a serious concern about a child’s welfare; and</p> <p>are familiar with, and act in accordance with, the home’s child protection policies;</p> <p>that the home’s day-to-day care is arranged and delivered so as to keep each child safe and to protect each child effectively from harm;</p> <p>that the effectiveness of the home’s child protection policies is monitored regularly.</p> <p>(Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(iv)(v)(vi)(vii)(b))</p> <p>This specifically relates to ensuring that night-time risk-management arrangements safeguard children. Also, to</p>	<p>3 July 2022</p>

<p>ensure that risk assessments reflect children’s needs and identified risks and include guidance on how staff should respond to risks.</p>	
<p>The protection of children standard is that children are protected from harm and enabled to keep themselves safe.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure—</p> <p>that staff—</p> <p>help each child to understand how to keep safe. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(ii))</p> <p>This specifically relates to ensuring that systems are in place to help keep children safe online. This is an escalation of the recommendation made at the last inspection.</p>	<p>3 July 2022</p>
<p>The leadership and management standard is that the registered person enables, inspires and leads a culture in relation to the children’s home that—</p> <p>helps children aspire to fulfil their potential; and promotes their welfare.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to—</p> <p>lead and manage the home in a way that is consistent with the approach and ethos, and delivers the outcomes, set out in the home’s statement of purpose;</p> <p>ensure that staff work as a team where appropriate;</p> <p>ensure that staff have the experience, qualifications and skills to meet the needs of each child;</p> <p>ensure that the home has sufficient staff to provide care for each child;</p> <p>ensure that the home’s workforce provides continuity of care to each child;</p> <p>understand the impact that the quality of care provided in the home is having on the progress and experiences of each child and use this understanding to inform the development of the quality of care provided in the home;</p>	<p>3 July 2022</p>

feedback on the experiences of children, including complaints received; and

use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home.
(Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(a)(b)(d)(e)(f)(h))

This specifically relates to ensuring consistent management oversight of staff practice and ensuring that monitoring systems are effective. Additionally, it relates to ensuring that the home has sufficient staff to care for and supervise children.

*These requirements are subject to a compliance notice.

Information about this inspection

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people, using the social care common inspection framework. This inspection was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000 to assess the effectiveness of the service, how it meets the core functions of the service as set out in legislation, and to consider how well it complies with the Children's Homes (England) Regulations 2015 and the 'Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards'.

Children's home details

Unique reference number: SC358046

Provision sub-type: Residential special school

Registered provider: The Senad Group Limited

Registered provider address: Senad Group Ltd, 1 St Georges House, Vernon Gate, Derby DE1 1UQ

Responsible individual: Mark Flynn

Registered manager: Karen Tatham

Inspectors

Pradip Panchmatia, Social Care Inspector

Zoey Lee, Social Care Inspector

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